

Physician know thyself

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[mental health](#), [Mental health for doctors](#), [ontheblogs](#), [work life balance](#)

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Editor: Elizabeth Ca

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We Welcome Your Feedback

Let's Talk

1. What additional type of content and topics would you like to see onthewards cover?

powered by SurveyMonkey

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Here are some strategies for recognising features of your personality that may be influencing the way you work:

- **Think about yourself from a different perspective.** One approach to self-analysis is to understand that our strengths can also be our weaknesses, and to re-frame them as such for the purpose of reflection. If you're a perfectionist then you produce amazing work - but it might be slow and inefficient. If you're a great collaborator you might be terrible at handling conflict. Consider how you can use your strengths and understand your weaknesses to improve your practice and confidence.
- **Ask for feedback.** Ask your team - how are you doing at work, and what can you do better? Your registrar is ideally placed to comment on how you are doing day to day. Consider asking friends and family for their honest opinion on your strengths and

weaknesses. Be prepared for some hard-hitting answers – these are often the ones you learn the most from.

- **Analyse key events.** Think about a moment during the week that was particularly stressful and try to break down why you perceived it in that way. Maybe you had a particularly busy day on take and this affected your mood. Why was that? Was it the quantity of work or the nature of the tasks? In a situation where you may not be able to control external factors, recognising your personality tendencies and modulating your response to these external stressors can empower you. If you find it very difficult or distressing to examine stressful events by yourself, then do it with a friend, colleague, or use a free confidential counselling service like the employee assistance program through your hospital.
- **Test yourself.** Quizzes such as the Myer Briggs Type Indicator questionnaire are commonly used and can assess personality traits such as introversion, extraversion, perception and judgement. Note that these are not evidence-based, so just have fun and take it with a grain of salt.

Common personality traits

A number of studies have shown that anaesthesiologists face a higher risk of psychological distress. Japanese residents who were more likely to undergo a procedure with a high level of directedness were significantly more likely to have a Type A personality. Canadian physicians with a Type A personality

Three common weaknesses

While there are many common personality traits, there are three common weaknesses that you should know how to target them.

The image shows a screenshot of a SurveyMonkey feedback form. The window title is "We Welcome Your Feedback". The main heading is "Let's Talk". The question is "1. What additional type of content and topics would you like to see on the wards cover?". There is a text input field below the question. At the bottom, it says "powered by SurveyMonkey".

. A study of Dutch anaesthesiologists found that a high level of directedness was a significant risk factor increasing risk of psychological distress (1). A study of Japanese residents who were significantly more likely to undergo a procedure with a high level of directedness and low self-efficacy were more likely to have a Type A personality. A survey of 1,178 physicians with a Type A personality, 62% with a Type A personality

There are several common personality traits. Let's talk about three common weaknesses and myself on

Doctor personality traits. Neuroticism

- Neuroticism is one of the most common personality traits in doctors. It can motivate us to work harder, maintain high standards, and achieve goals. The flipside is that neuroticism can make life more stressful than it needs to be, for both you and those around you. An overly neurotic doctor can cause tension and stress within a team, ineffective use of available resources, burnout, and poor patient outcomes. An article from the BMJ on perfectionism suggests some early warning signs (4): “all or nothing” thinking, micromanaging of team members, failure to delegate, inability to forgive small errors, dissatisfaction with success, procrastination to avoid the possibility of making an error, and relentless striving for achievement without praising others.
- What can you do about this? One approach is to make a conscious effort to reduce the impact of your neuroticism on others. If you're a resident with difficulty delegating to your intern, discuss with them which tasks you would like to delegate and take the time to discuss how they should be done. Accept that so long as the ultimate goal of patient safety is achieved, they do not need to perform the task exactly as you do.

